



Brussels, 15 May 2020

Mgr. Cardinal Vinko Puljić
Kaptol 7
71 000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Your Eminence,

Last year, the EPP Group's Working Group on Intercultural and Religious Dialogue organised a fact-finding mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim to encourage a solution for the electoral impasse through dialogue between religious communities in the country. Out of this experience, we fully comprehend and support your important role for peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We even planned another exchange of views with representatives of all religious communities from your country in the Parliament to follow up on the fact-finding mission. Unfortunately, due to the corona pandemic, we needed to postpone the meeting.

In the beginning of this mandate the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe, 10 years after the resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism, wherein we acknowledge the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there can be no reconciliation without remembrance. In this light, on behalf of the EPP's Group Working Group on Intercultural Relations and Interreligious Dialogue, we stand by your right for the culture of remembrance and support to fully exercise your right to lead the Mass on Saturday for the victims of the Bleiburg tragedy.

As we became aware of the heavy media attacks against the Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the recent days, we are deeply saddened that your right for the culture of remembrance is hampered. We rely on the action of our external action Service and the actions of EU delegation on the ground that should ensure media freedom for all the constituent people and communities and the right of religious groups and religious minorities to be respected and not to fear for their security in exercising their religious services. We would like to remind that our EPP Group did the utmost to help Bosnia and Herzegovina to overcome this pandemic crisis and we are doing our best for this country not to be forgotten on its European path.

We are aware of the fact that you informed the authorities of the Holy See regarding the breach of the international agreement for the freedom of the Catholic Church and for fearing for the security and the freedom of religion of the Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rest assured that if this situation aggravates, we will address this issue in the European Parliament as well.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Olbrycht MEP
Co-Chairman of the EPP Working Group on
Intercultural and Religious Dialogue

György Hölvényi MEP
Co-Chairman of the EPP Working Group on
Intercultural and Religious Dialogue

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Željana Zovko". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Željana Zovko MEP
Member of the EPP Working Group on
Intercultural and Religious Dialogue